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SHADWELL'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO *SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER* AND TO *THE TENDER HUSBAND*.

I.

Mr. G. A. Aitkin in the introduction to his edition of Steele's plays¹ says that Goldsmith was indebted to Steele's comedy *The Tender Husband* for the idea of his Tony Lumpkin.² This theory has been undisputed even since it was advanced. However, a much better candidate for the honor of being Tony Lumpkin's original than Steele's Humphrey Gubbin, and one who not improbably was Steele's own model besides, is Thomas Shadwell's Young Hartford, a character in his comedy *The Lancashire Witches*. There is not only a close resemblance between this personage and Goldsmith's, but there are some additional points which go to prove Goldsmith's knowledge and use of the old play.

In the first place, Young Hartford in Shadwell's *dramatis personae*³ is thus described: "a clownish, sordid, Country Fool, that loves nothing but drinking Ale, and Country Sports." As his father says, he

" delights

In Dogs and Horses, Peasants, Ale and Sloth."⁴

Sir Edward Hartford, his father, designs to marry him to his cousin, Theodosia, a beautiful and accomplished young woman. The younger Hartford, however, has no love for her, and pays her attentions only at his father's commands. He is "bashful, very indifferent and no Lover at all."⁵ Theodosia's brother, Sir Timothy Shacklehead⁶ is the suitor of Hartford's sister, Isabella. These two young women favor a pair of London gentlemen, Bellfort and Doubty. During

¹ The Complete Plays of Richard Steele. (The Mermaid Series.) Edited by . . . G. A. Aitken. London. 1894.

² Ibid. Introduction, p. XXVI.

³ The Works of Thomas Shadwell, Esq. London, 1720. Vol. III, p. 222.

⁴ Act I, Sc. I, (p. 227).

⁵ Act. I, Sc. I (p. 228).

⁶ "Sir Thomas Shacklehead" in the *dramatis personae*.

the course of the play the unwilling courtship of Young Hartford goes on until at its end, to his satisfaction, Theodosia marries Doubty and the proposed match is, of course, declared off.

The resemblance between Young Hartford and Tony Lumpkin is a very close one. Hardecastle says of his stepson, "The alehouse and the stables are the only schools he'll ever go to."⁷ Tony is introduced in an inn in Act I (cf. Young Hartford, Act IV, Sc. I, "Enter Young Hartford drunk.") His mother intends him to marry his cousin, Constance Neville, but this he is unwilling to do, and more or less openly shows his disapprobation of the project. He, indeed, takes an interest in assisting Hasting's courtship of Constance, so as to get her out of his way. Neither Hartford nor Tony dislikes his cousin, but neither has any desire for a nearer relationship.

A hint for Act I, Sc. 2 of *She Stoops to Conquer* is found in the latter part of the witch scene in Act I of *The Lancashire Witches*.⁸ Goldsmith's scene is laid in an inn. Marlowe and Hastings enter, having lost their way "upo' the forest." Tony directs them to his step-father's house as to an inn. In the other play Bellfort and Doubty enter to Clod who has been set in a tree by witches. They have lost their way in a sudden storm while seeking the means of seeing Isabella and Theodosia. Clod finally falls from his tree and after a time guides them to Sir Edward Hartford's house for shelter.

In Act II, Sc. I and in Act IV, of *She Stoops to Conquer* Goldsmith may have had in mind the courtship of Sir Timothy and Isabella. Tony and Constance make love in public but are distinctly cousinly in bearing in private. Shadwell's couple quarrel in private but are very peaceable when in company.⁹

⁷ The works of Oliver Goldsmith, Edited by Peter Cunningham. London. Vol. I, *She Stoops to Conquer*. Act I. Sc. I.

⁸ Pp. 238-241.

⁹ In Etherege's *The Man of Mode*, Act III, Sc. 1, and in Marmion's *A Fine Companion*, Act II, Sc. 4, and Act III, Sc. 5, are situations similar to those noted above. In each of these plays two young people who

Lady Shacklehead's praise of her son's accomplishments and appearance¹⁰ bears a slight resemblance to Mrs. Hardcastle's apologies for Tony's shortcomings in Act I, Sc. I of Goldsmith's play. The likeness is merely a general one.

The possible origin of Marlowe's bashfulness and of his taciturnity when in Miss Hardcastle's presence¹¹ may be found in Act II of Shadwell's play.¹² The two passages are alike in that they show the deepest embarrassment on the part of the male participant in the dialogue and a certain degree of maliciousness in each woman's attitude toward the other person.

The suggested qualities of Kate Hardcastle¹³ are much the same as those of Isabella (mentioned in Act I, Sc. I *The Lancashire Witches*). "Sense and discretion," the characteristics which are suggested as the former's, are Shadwell's heroine's, judging from the balanced lists of traits he gives her in an indirect way.

Sir Edward Hartford, too, may be the source of Hardcastle. Shadwell in his *dramatis personae* describes Sir Edward as "A worthy, hospitable, true *English* Gentleman, of good Understanding and honest Principles." The likeness of the two characters is very well shown by a comparison of Act I, Sc. I, *She Stoops to Conquer* and Act III, Sc. I, of *The Lancashire Witches*.

Practically the only likeness that there is between *The Tender Husband*—to return to Mr. Aitken's belief—and *She Stoops to Conquer* is the same as that which exists between the first play and *The Lancashire Witches*: that is to say, in Steele's play a country youth, Humphrey Gubbin, is designed by his father to marry his cousin who dislikes the match

are more or less indifferent to each other pretend affection for each other in public, but are cool to each other in private—by agreement between them. The same element occurs in De Musset's *Frédéric et Bernadette*, chap. 3.

¹⁰ Act II, Sc. I. *The Lancashire Witches* (pp. 248-249).

¹¹ *She Stoops to Conquer*, (Act II, Sc. I).

¹² Pp. 246-248.

¹³ Act I, Sc. I, *She Stoops to Conquer*.

as much as he. At the ends of the respective plays each has found a mate more to his fancy than the destined one.

It must be said though that Humphrey, like Tony Lumpkin, is kept in ignorance by his father of his having come of age, and also that he aids Clermont in his courtship of Biddy Tipkin in a way that recalls Tony's attempts at assisting Hastings and Constance. One can but conclude after comparing the three plays, however, that, although possibly Goldsmith drew on Steele for one or two ideas, yet he went to Shadwell's comedy for a much larger amount of material to be used by him after some pruning and rearrangement.

II.

In the preceding discussion I have mentioned an apparent relationship between *The Tender Husband* and *The Lancashire Witches*. Another of Shadwell's plays—*The Squire of Alsatia*—bears a certain resemblance to Steele's play.

The seeming debt of *The Tender Husband* to *The Lancashire Witches* lies chiefly in the characters of Young Hartford and Humphry Gubbin and in their courtships of Theodosia and Biddy. Young Hartford and his cousin Theodosia are to marry, not because of any desire on their part but because it is the wish of their families. Hartford, in fact, is to be disinherited by his father unless he pays his addresses to Theodosia.¹⁴ She is in love with Doubty, a London gentleman, and so she pretends to encourage her cousin only in the presence of the parents of one or the other. In private they make no secret of their coldness toward each other.

Humphry Gubbin, in Steele's play, is an ignorant country youth of the same type as Young Hartford. His father wishes him to marry his cousin Biddy. Her uncle and guardian, Old Tipkin, favors the match. In Act I, Sc. 2, Humphry is first introduced. Here he makes some objections to matrimony, but his father silences him by a reference to his cudgel, for although the boy is twenty-three his father still uses physical suasion with him. In Act III, Sc. 2, Humphry finally meets his cousin and the ensuing dialogue resembles slightly

¹⁴ Act II, Sc. 1 (p. 246).

that between Theodosia and Young Hartford.¹⁵ At the end of Steele's scene Humphry and Biddy vow eternal hatred, one for the other. The aunt, Mrs. Tipkin, enters unperceived and mistakes the mutual protestations for protestations of love. This resembles an incident in Act IV, Sc. I, of Shadwell's play.¹⁶ Theodosia enters from having confessed her love to Doubty and finds Isabella, her cousin and Hartford's sister, on the stage. Bellfort, her lover, has just left her. The two then compare notes upon their happiness. While each is praising the perfections of her lover, Theodosia's parents and her brother—Isabella's hated suitor—enter. They mistake the purport of the conversation and are confirmed in their mistake by the young women who discover them.¹⁷ A hint for the tone of the dialogue between Biddy and Humphry may be found in the scenes between Sir Timothy, Theodosia's brother, and Isabella. He is very anxious to marry her—unlike Humphry—but she despises him and treats him with great harshness when they are alone. In company, however, she simulates great affection for him. This same thing is done by Biddy with this difference—Humphry aids in her deception.

Sir Edward Hartford, the father of Young Hartford, and Sir Harry Gubbin, the father of Humphry, bear a certain likeness to each other. They are of the same general type—country gentlemen who are proud of that station. Another of Shadwell's characters to whom Sir Harry owes more than to Sir Edward will be discussed below.

This is Sir William Belfond in *The Squire of Alsatia*, “a Gentleman of above 3000 l. per Annum, who in his Youth had been a Spark of the Town, but married and retired into the Country; where he turned to the other Extream, rigid and morose, most sordidly covetous, clownish, obstinate, positive and forward.”¹⁸ That Sir Harry's characteristics correspond

¹⁵ *The Lancashire Witches*, Act III, Sc. 1 (p. 266).

¹⁶ Pp. 292-93.

¹⁷ Cf. Sheridan, *The Rivals*, Act III, Sc. 3.

¹⁸ *The Squire of Alsatia*, *Dramatis personae*. Vol. IV. The Works of Thomas Shadwell.

with Sir William's can be seen after reading Act I, Sc. 2, of *The Tender Husband*.

The actions of Humphrey Gubbin while in London are similar to those of Belfond Senior, Sir William's elder son, but in a modified form. Belfond is thus described by Shadwell, "eldest Son to Sir William; bred after his Father's rustick, swinish manner, with great Rigour and Severity; upon whom his Father's Estate is entailed; the Confidence of which makes him break out into open Rebellion to his Father, and become leud, abominably vicious and obstinate."¹⁹

Belfond Senior is in London without his father's knowledge, the latter having come to London, also, for the purpose of negotiating the marriage of his son with the niece of Scrapeall,²⁰ a usurer—the same errand as Sir Harry Gubbin's.²¹ The young Belfond, who has been always under the very close surveillance of his father, has fallen into the hands of some residents of Whitefriars, or Alsatia, who set to work to make way with as much of their victim's money as possible.

Belfond and Humphrey have had virtually the same sort of education. Sir William says of his son, "I have a Son whom by my Strictness I have formed according to my Heart: He never puts on his Hat in my Presence; rises at second Course, takes away his Plate, says Grace, and saves me the charge of a Chaplain. Whenever he committed a Fault, I maul'd him with Correction; I'd fain see him once dare to be extravagant!"²² Sir Harry says of his son's education, "I never suffered him to have anything he liked in his life. . . . He has been trained up from his childhood under such a plant as this in my hand—I have taken pains in his education." "It has been the custom of the Gubbins to preserve severity and discipline in their families." "He has been bred up to respect and silence before his parents." "Observe his make, none of your lath-backed, wishy-washy breed."²³

¹⁹ *Dramatis personae*.

²⁰ Compare Scrapeall and Steele's Mr. Tipkin, Biddy's uncle.

²¹ It is worth noting that neither Belfond or Humphrey has seen his prospective wife before the play's opening. The former, indeed, is ignorant of his father's intentions.

²² *The Squire of Alsatia*. Act I, Sc. 1, (p. 28).

²³ *The Tender Husband*. Act I, Sc. 2.

Among other disreputable characters Belfond meets Cheatly, "a leud, impudent, debauch'd fellow," who plans to marry him to Mrs. Termagant, the cast-off mistress of Belfond's younger brother.²⁴ This is for the purpose of more easily gulling Belfond Senior, of revenging the woman, and also of providing for her. She is a vindictive individual, who, to secure the elder Belfond, plays the part of "a Town Lady of Quality."

In Act V, Sc. 2, this plot which has been going forward smoothly falls through. A company, including a parson, is gathered at Mrs. Termagant's lodgings to witness the marriage. But Belfond Junior and a posse break in, arrest the party on various charges, and lay bare the villainy of the entire assembly just in time to prevent the performing of the ceremony. At the end of the play—the next scene—the repentant Belfond admits his past folly, asks his father's pardon and has a settlement made upon him by his parents, who has modified his ideas of education of children to a considerable extent.

In Act I, Sc. 2, of *The Tender Husband*, immediately after Sir Harry Gubbin and Tipkin have left the stage "to take a whet" and to conclude the arrangements for the marriage, Pounce enters with his sister, Mrs. Fainlove, disguised as a man. Pounce is Sir Harry's attorney and Mrs. Fainlove is the mistress of Clerimont Senior, "the tender husband." The lawyer and Humphry fall into conversation in the course of which the younger Gubbin makes apparent his hate for, and fear of, his father. Pounce advises him to rebel against the parental authority since the estate is entailed. It may be remarked in passing that Pounce is a rather pleasing Cheatly; he uses, in addition, the same reasoning in regard to the entailed estate as does Shamwell in Act I, Sc. 1, of *Shadwell's* play. Pounce offers to introduce Humphry to a woman of prodigious fortune, a sister to the disguised Fainlove, by whom he means no other than her. The attorney gives

²⁴ Belfond Junior, who has been reared by his uncle, Sir Edward Belfond, is almost an exact opposite to his brother, judged by the standard of *Shadwell's* time, although their relationship is somewhat apparent to the present-day reader.

Humphry a purse for his present needs. This should be compared with Scrapeall's lending money to Belfond Senior.

Humphrey is introduced to Mrs. Clerimont, a fine lady, with whom the disguised Mrs. Fainlove pretends to be in love, and exhibits himself in various ways. His love-making with the attorney's sister is not shown. In the last scene of the play he and his newly-married wife come on the stage to sue for the forgiveness of Sir Harry. After a stormy scene this is granted and the play ends without Humphry's learning of his wife's having been Clerimont's mistress. Pounce, the equivalent of the many sharpers who prey on Belfond, is punished in no way.

It should be pointed out that both Mrs. Termagant and Mrs. Fainlove appear on the stage in male habits and succeed in passing themselves off as men. Furthermore, the germ, but nothing more, of Act II, Sc. 1, of *The Tender Husband* may be found in *The Squire of Alsatia*, Act III, Sc. 1, (pp. 97-98). These scenes introduce the books which Biddy has been reading—romances—and the sort of literature which the two heroines of the latter play indulge in when the opportunity offers—poetry and romances. Ruth, Shadwell's female gaoler, "a precise Governess," corresponds to a certain extent to Mrs. Tipkin, Biddy's aunt. Their criticisms of the favored kind of reading matter are very much alike.

Scrapeall's appearance in the last scene of *The Squire of Alsatia* is the source of Tipkin's quarrel with Sir Harry in the corresponding scene of Steele's play. The idea of the latter scene, however, is all that comes from Shadwell, as Steele has developed a very amusing dispute between Tipkin and Sir Harry over the settlements.

In the preceding discussion I have attempted to show that Steele for his comedy drew upon two of Shadwell's for characters, situations, and incidents. He has cut down the old plays, and reduced them into a compact and clean comedy; the resemblances to the sources remain, however, and are too obvious, it seems to me, to do anything else than to lead the reader to the conclusion which I have drawn—that of Steele's indebtedness to Shadwell.

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